Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor to which a first image signal encoded by a first compressing and encoding method is inputted and in which the first image signal is transcoded to a second image signal encoded by a second compressing and encoding method, the signal processor comprising:

a picture selector which generates a subset image signal of the first image signal by extracting pictures of one or more specific types in frames or fields from the first image signal without decoding the first image signal;

a first decoder which decodes the subset image signal generated by the picture selector at a decoding rate;

a first encoder which encodes the decoded image signal by a second compressing and encoding method;

a video stream supplying section configured to supply the first image signal to the picture selector;

wherein the picture selector uses the extracted pictures to generate the subset image signal whose effective length is reduced, and supplies the subset image signal at a first bit rate to the first decoder, the first bit rate of the subset image signal being set to correspond to the decoding rate of the subset image signal by the first decoder; and

the video stream supplying section supplies the first image signal at a second bit rate to the picture selector to compensate for an amount of code of the pictures which are not extracted by the picture selector, the second bit rate of the first image signal being set higher than the first bit rate of the subset image signal.

2.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor which reads out a first image signal encoded by a first compressing and encoding method from a recoding medium and

transcodes the first image signal to a second image signal encoded by a second compressing and encoding method, signal processor comprising:

an interface section which generates a subset image signal of the first image signal by extracting pictures of one or more specific types in frames or fields from the first image signal without decoding the first image signal;

a first decoder which decodes the subset image signal generated by the interface section at a decoding rate;

a first encoder which encodes the decoded image signal by a second compressing and encoding method;

a video stream supplying section configured to supply the first image signal to the interface section;

wherein the interface section uses the extracted pictures to generate the subset image signal whose effective length is reduced, and supplies the subset image signal at a first bit rate to the first decoder, the first bit rate of the subset image signal being set to correspond to the decoding rate of the subset image signal by the first decoder; and

the video stream supplying section supplies the first image signal at a second bit rate to the interface section to compensate for an amount of code of the pictures which are not extracted by the interface section, the second bit rate of the first image signal being set higher than the first bit rate of the subset image signal.

3.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor according to claim 1, wherein the subset image signal has the extracted pictures arranged sequentially therein and the effective length of the subset image signal is reduced.

4.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor according to claim 2, wherein the interface section extracts and reads out pictures of one or more specific types by referring to management information recorded along with the first image signal on the recording medium.

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       5.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor according to claim 1, wherein the picture selector performs picture extraction in such a manner that each extracted picture can refer to another extracted picture for motion compensation.

       6.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor according to claim 1, wherein: the first compressing and encoding method is an MPEG2 method and the second compressing and encoding method is an MPEG4 method; and the picture selector generates the subset image signal by extracting I-pictures and P-pictures.

       7.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor according to claim 1, wherein the picture selector allows the user to specify what types of pictures are to be extracted.

       8.   (Canceled)

       9.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor according to claim 1, further comprising:

       a frame memory for storing the image signal decoded by the first decoder; and

       a display section which reads out the image signal from the frame memory and outputs the image signal to a display unit, wherein images being transcoded are displayed on the display unit.

       10.   (Previously Presented) An imaging apparatus using the signal processor according to claim 1, said imaging apparatus comprising: an image pickup section which picks up an object; a second encoder which, by the first compressing and encoding method, encodes the first image signal supplied from the image pickup section; and a recording and reproducing section which records and reproduces the first image signal encoded by the second encoder to and from a recording medium, wherein the first image signal reproduced from the recording medium is supplied to the signal processor.

       11.   (Previously Presented) An imaging apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

a receiver which receives an image signal from the outside, wherein the second encoder encodes the image signal supplied from the receiver by the first compressing and encoding method.

12.   (Previously Presented) An imaging apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

a receiver which receives the first image signal encoded by the first compressing and encoding method from the outside, wherein the recording and reproducing section records and reproduces the first image signal supplied from the receiver to and from the recording medium.

13.   (Original) An imaging apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the recording and reproducing apparatus generates management information from the first image signal recorded on the recording medium and records the management information on the recording medium.

14.   (Previously Presented) A signal processor according to claim 1, wherein the signal processor outputs the second image signal to an external equipment.